

ST. BEDE CATHOLIC SCHOOL INTEGRITY POLICY

Plagiarism

Rationale: Plagiarism demonstrates a lack of integrity and character that is inconsistent with the goals and values of St. Bede Catholic School.

Plagiarism is defined as “copying or stealing someone else’s words or ideas and claiming or presenting them as if they were your own.” Excellent written expression of well-formulated ideas is a fundamental skill for processing information and creating a written document or copying someone else’s assignments. Plagiarism interferes with the assessment and feedback process that is necessary in order to promote academic growth. Plagiarism doesn’t allow the instructor to accurately assess a student’s strengths and weaknesses because it is not his or her work. Plagiarizing also interferes in the student being able to reach his or her potential as well as being independently successful.

Plagiarism includes:

- taking someone else’s assignment or portion of an assignment and submitting it as one’s own
- submitting material written by someone else or rephrasing the ideas of another without giving the author’s name or source
- presenting the work of tutors, parents, siblings, or friends as one’s own
- submitting purchased papers as one’s own
- submitting papers from the Internet written by someone else as one’s own
- supporting plagiarism by providing work to others, whether it is believed it will be copied or not

Cheating

Rationale: Cheating demonstrates a lack of integrity and character that is inconsistent with the goals and values of St. Bede Catholic School.

Education is based on learning specific concepts and skills, forming lifelong work habits, and developing ways to acquire skills that will develop and enhance each student's unique abilities. Stress pushes students to make unethical choices. When students choose to cheat, it can be for one of the following reasons such as not being prepared to take a quiz/test, not completing homework or class assignments, and/or over-commitment to extra-curricular activities. Students are aware of their shortcomings and try to meet their own expectations or the expectations of others at the cost of their ethics. For most students true self-esteem is based on competence and skill level. Cheating robs students of their opportunity to maintain their integrity and competency. Assignments should be considered individual unless the instructor states otherwise.

Cheating includes:

- copying, emailing, or in any way duplicating assignments that are turned in, wholly or in part, as original work
- exchanging assignments with other students, either handwritten or computer generated, whether it is believed they will be copied or not
- using any form of memory aid during tests or quizzes without the expressed permission of the instructor
- giving or receiving answers during tests or quizzes. It is the student's responsibility to secure his or her papers so other students will not have the opportunity or the temptation to copy
- taking credit for group work when the student has not contributed an equal or appropriate share toward the final result

Alternatives to cheating and plagiarism:

No student needs to cheat or plagiarize. St. Bede Catholic School provides numerous support services for students to help them achieve success honorably. Students who advocate for themselves and seek appropriate help when they need it will not need to cheat or plagiarize.

The following behaviors promote true student achievement:

1. Each student should be prepared for class. He/She should try to keep to a realistic schedule balancing academic obligations and extra-curricular activities including sports.
2. Students should make certain that they understand the assignments and the grading assessment that will be used. If a student should have questions about an assignment or an assessment, he/she should talk to the teacher. Students should not rely solely upon a classmate for clarification.
3. If a student studies for a test with another classmate, he/she should make sure that he/she does not sit near each other during the test since responses (and errors) may be similar.
4. A student should not read or scan someone else's paper before writing his/her own. Some of the ideas in the other student's paper may be ideas that he/she would have used, but will now need to credit the student whose paper they read for those ideas.
5. Students should use all avenues of support available. Teachers are available to help students during and after school. Peer tutors and/ or a parent or other adult who understands the material can also help out.
6. Assignments should be considered individual unless the teacher states otherwise.
7. Students should be organized. Having class notes in an orderly, easily accessible format will save time and anxiety when studying for a test or completing assignments that may seem difficult.
8. Students should keep current with assignments. Students should also reread chapters that have been read in class at home and take notes that will help them to remember what they have read in order to help them study for quizzes and tests.
9. If, for whatever reason, a student chooses to use another's ideas or solutions, cite that person as a source on your paper or project.
10. Students need to know what constitutes cheating, including all the variations of plagiarism.

The role of parental support in their children's achievement and ethical development:

Parental support of academic achievement and ethical development is fundamental to students' long-term success. The following behaviors will assist parents in promoting true student achievement:

1. Teachers are available for extra help after school on designated days or right after school.
2. Assess your child's abilities realistically. Help her/him to choose courses in which she/he will be successful and challenged without undue stress.
3. Don't push children beyond their limits with your expectations or aspirations. Many times students make bad decisions because the pressure to excel is greater than their ability to meet the expectations.
4. If you suspect your child is experiencing difficulty in a class, please contact the teacher. The sooner the problem is identified the sooner steps can be taken to alleviate it.
5. If your child is caught cheating and you are called, please remember that this is a learning experience; help your child to accept the consequences for his/her inappropriate actions.

Repercussions

See teacher grading policies and student handbook for discussion of consequences for plagiarism and cheating. Be aware that cheating is often a joint undertaking. Cheating is always harmful to all parties involved. It sacrifices the integrity of the person who provides the materials and robs the copier of the opportunity to learn. When cheating is not an individual activity, all parties involved are equally guilty and will be subject to the same consequences. Intellectual honesty on the parts of all students is fundamental to their ethical development.

~~*****~~ ADAPTED FROM NORTH HUNTERDON HIGH SCHOOL

POLICY ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM